GOAL THREE

Improve or enhance North Dakota University System's collaborative efforts.

STRATEGIES

- Fully implement a North Dakota University System help desk.

- Improve communication with all stakeholders of North Dakota University System/Common Information Service (NDUS-CIS).

- Collaborate with North Dakota University System campuses, K-12, state and local governments, and libraries to identify appropriate learning and research support systems.

- Work with Online Dakota Information Network (ODIN) libraries to expand digital holdings.

- Promote Internet2 and advanced networking.

- Provide training and support for network videoconferencing user groups.

People with ideas working together tend to produce products and services with improved efficiencies. If this way of working becomes commonplace within a community, you have developed a "culture of collaboration." Our challenge is to continue doing this in an increasingly complex environment. It takes a significant amount of effort to coordinate the activities on one campus, let alone a whole state. We keep our sanity by working on the interfaces — the places where the "communities" touch. Mostly, this is where they interchange information. As an example, the North Dakota University System help desk presents a collaborative opportunity, specifically because students' "work" days don't typically end at 5 p.m. They often study during night hours, and can't put questions on hold until the morning. Students experience a need for information 24 hours a

day, whether it's for a class they are taking at their local university, or one from across the state. Through technology in North Dakota, we are trying to give them the access needed. By working together to provide off-hour support for distance education students through supportive help desks, these students can receive answers to their questions day or night.

We will work harder to communicate with our partners and within our community, as well as among other technology groups in the state. This communication must easily reach from every campus administrator to every staff member. One way we will do this is by appointing a communications coordinator who can relay technical messages to a non-technical audience.

The Online Dakota Information Network (ODIN) helps individuals, agencies and government work together to increase electronic subscriptions, research journals and databases available to member libraries (and all North Dakota libraries where possible). ODIN provides public access to library information and research materials to its member libraries and acts as a virtual library for on-line users. By joining efforts and upgrading technology, the future of ODIN will see improved services, speed and efficiency, and allow its users to access information with technology in an even more timely manner than they do today.

Now that many citizens have come to rely on the Internet, a new form of communication is emerging within higher education. Internet2 is the "next network." In the future, Internet2 will help North Dakotans transmit information more efficiently. It provides a higher connection speed and is currently used for research. It will be used to develop, test, and change network protocols, thereby resulting in better and faster ways of transmitting data without swamping the current network. Currently, participating in Internet2 activities allows us to show other states that North Dakota is staying in the technology forefront. To do otherwise is to disappear from the technology map in the future. To eventually emerge as a leader, we must "keep up" with the latest developments by understanding and implementing this new technology.

North Dakota has a crucial need for this technology – we can enable our students to excel in advanced courses by using video networking. Others will communicate better and faster than ever before. Still others can research topics at the click of a button. We need to keep up with the new trends and simplify the learning curve so that the technology increasingly obeys the Principle of Least Astonishment. In this way a richer and more capable technology environment will be integral to the future of North Dakota.

"As the North Dakota University System help desk grows, our help desk services must keep pace."